

Maurice Hinchey NEWS

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\$3.5 MILLION FOR TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS IN BINGHAMTON AND ITHACA INCLUDED IN SPENDING BILL

WASHINGTON - U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that the 2002 spending bill for the U.S. Department of Transportation includes over \$3 million for intermodal transportation centers in Binghamton and Ithaca and \$500,000 to expand transportation services in Binghamton. The projects were among several Hinchey placed in the Transportation Appropriations bill, which was passed by the full Appropriations Committee today. Hinchey is a member of the committee.

"I am gratified that the Transportation Appropriations bill includes funding for my priority requests," said Hinchey. "These transportation hubs in Binghamton and Ithaca will bring tremendous benefits to the cities. The downtown areas will be revitalized and services will be improved. Also the first impression many people will have of these two cities will be greatly enhanced, creating the potential for outside investment."

The spending bill contains \$2.4 million for the construction of a multi-purpose passenger transportation facility in Binghamton that will facilitate the transfer of passengers from the local bus and paratransit systems to the regional and intercity bus and rail systems. It will provide riders with safe and efficient transfers between different types of transportation as well as shelter from wind, rain and snow.

"We are extremely pleased to learn of funding for this vital project, which would impact not only the city of Binghamton but the county as a whole," said Binghamton Mayor Richard A. Bucci. "The intermodal transit center will allow a comprehensive, coordinated approach to our transportation needs and will upgrade a pivotal entranceway to the city of Binghamton. We are very grateful for Congressman Hinchey's help and enthusiastic support."

Steven Gayle, Executive Director of the Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study, added, "We very much appreciate Congressman Hinchey's hard work in obtaining federal funding to support the development of the Binghamton Intermodal Transit Terminal. When this project is completed, people throughout the Binghamton metropolitan area will benefit. The City of Binghamton and Broome County will benefit from this new development, which will enhance downtown and provide an appealing gateway to the community for those arriving from out of town. This project represents a very positive investment of federal funds in our community."

In addition, Hinchey successfully requested \$624,000 to complete the necessary funding for the Ithaca downtown terminal. The center will consolidate and replace existing terminals at a central location and would provide capacity for offices and bus storage at the same location. Hinchey has secured a total of \$1,728,000 for the project in previous fiscal years, bringing the total to \$2,352,000.

"We are excited about the benefits the intermodal hub will bring to downtown Ithaca and Tompkins County," said Rod Ghearing, General Manager of Tompkins Consolidated Area Trust. "With Congressman Hinchey's help in achieving full funding of our request, we are now one step closer towards this project becoming a reality."

Hinchey also placed in the bill \$500,000 for Broome County Transit through the federal Jobs Access and Reverse commute program. These funds will allow BC Transit to increase access to employment opportunities for residents of the South and West End corridors of the City of Binghamton.

The bill is expected to be considered and passed by the full House within a few weeks.

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